

MBS SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

As Christian people, we are called to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ in many ways. This year, I thought in place of my usual Christmas letter, I would use this special bulletin to share with you some of the good news of our parish. As we come to the end of this year, we have much for which to be grateful. Above all, we are a place where our Savior Jesus Christ is present and alive, bringing grace to our lives. He brings us consolation and hope in sad times, and joy and gladness in happy times. Our beautiful church exists to be a place where people meet the Lord—and all we do to support the parish enables people to live in Communion with God and strengthen our community created by Him. With Faith in our Newborn King, and on behalf of Msgr. Vance, Deacon Chris, Deacon Scheidel, and our whole parish staff, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and blessed New Year. Thank you for all you do for our parish and your witness of faith in the Lord. I love you all!

Your friend and pastor,

Fr. James



A GROWING COMMUNITY

For the second year in a row, we have welcomed over 30 new families to Most Blessed Sacrament. What a beautiful thing to meet new friends united by our faith in Jesus! Families and individuals of all ages have joined our parish family, and we want them to count on us to make them feel at home. We love you all and thank you for enriching our parish with your presence, talents, prayers, and faith!

PIPE ORGAN PROJECT UPDATE



Part of 1799 rank of flute pipes, at P.M.'s workshop.

This project is well underway! Our organ builder, Patrick Murphy & Associates, has met many challenges with skill and creativity. The organ's condition has made for a complex project, and is the composition of several different builders spanning over 200 years. While we discovered that most of the organ originally built by Krauss family had been replaced in the 20th century (as can happen due to damage, age, or other difficulties), we were happy to find that one rank of pipes likely dates to 1799, and some others to 1864! These pipes will receive new life again in our organ upon its return, along with carefully selected pipes from the other eras of our organ and new ranks as well. The original casework made in 1797 from local pine is being carefully restored, and the various casework additions are being redesigned to match the Krauss' original style.



CAD projection of finished organ in loft.

While we have worked hard to treasure our heritage, the even more important goal of this project is to have an organ that fits the beauty of our church and the organ's role to lead us and future generations in praise to the Lord! We anticipate that the organ will be installed sometime in the first half of 2024. Later in the year, we will hold a special concert when Bishop Schlert will come to bless and dedicate the organ.



Large 1864 Pipes. Part of 16' Pedal Principal.

How can you support the organ project? *Sponsor a Pipe:*

Thank you all who have sponsored pipes and major components of the organ! So far \$100,000 has been raised - wow! Let's keep up the momentum! Over 150 pipes have been sponsored and six major component sponsorships have been received. Please consider sponsoring a pipe to contribute to this momentous musical masterpiece! The façade pipes have been popular, and at this time there are only six more available—but there are many more available inside the case. Please see the Sponsor-A-Pipe booklet in the displays near the church entrances for more details about the many other interesting pipes we have!

SPONSOR A PIPE



Patrick Murphy shows organ pipes.
Photo credit to Organ Media Foundation

SCHOOL BELLS ARE RINGING AGAIN IN BALLY. SAINT FRANCIS CLASSICAL CATHOLIC ACADEMY IS OPEN!

In September 2023, we were happy to welcome almost 60 students to our Pre K – 8th Grade School. After two years of research and planning, and a lot of hard work, we resumed our 280-year-plus tradition of Catholic Education. Many of our parishioners helped to paint, repair, and prepare our school building for the new school year. The parish has purchased a new roof, heating and air conditioning system, and various other important improvements. A greenhouse was also donated and erected to help teach about how our food and plants grow!



Bishop Coffey of the Military Archdiocese visits with classrooms on Sept 11.



Part of the school's All Saints Day Procession

With approval from Bishop Schlert, Saint Francis Classical Catholic Academy

is an Independent Catholic School with a classical liberal arts curriculum. It is called independent because the school board, comprised of committed and talented parishioners, has complete and direct oversight over the school's operations, rather than the Diocesan Office of Education.

The only Catholic school in the diocese which has adopted the classical model, the Catholic liberal arts curriculum is decidedly light on technology, and places our students in touch with the great books of our civilization, the fine arts, and theology, while teaching the STEM disciplines as

well. If you come to a daily mass, you will see our students participate and attending mass each day. Please visit the school's new website at www.sfcca.school to learn more!

BINGO!

Our monthly Sunday bingo has steadily grown over the past year. Typically every 3rd Sunday of the Month, over 100 players come together for a great time. A new bingo machine and number boards were purchased and installed last month. To meet the growing demand, Janice Szilli and her amazing crew of volunteers need more people to help with running the games for a few months of the year! Thanks to the Knights of Columbus for taking over the kitchen. The proceeds from bingo support the parish and the school. Please consider volunteering and contact the rectory office to offer your help!

OUR NEW DEACONS



Deacon Chris and Mrs. Cathy Kinsella

Bishop Schlert has generously assigned two deacons to our parish: Rev. Mr. Aaron Scheidel and Deacon Chris Kinsella. Deacon Scheidel, a native of Mohnton is a transitional deacon, meaning that he is preparing to be ordained a priest in June of 2024. He is completing his studies at St. Charles Borromeo seminary in Overbrook and now spends his weekends with us. Deacon Kinsella and his wife Cathy live in Macungie; they are parents and grandparents, and they bring their great talent and desire to serve our parish. Deacons are ordained ministers who administer Baptism, conduct weddings, bring Holy Communion to the sick, preside at Benediction and other devotions, and assist the priest at Holy Mass. Both deacons are involved with many other aspects of parish life. Welcome to them and thank you for your ministry.



Deacon Scheidel

TO RESTORE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST: THE RESTORATION CONTINUES

While the pipe organ project is the centerpiece of our Restoration, many other improvements have been made and a few more are planned. So far, we have installed three new roofs: on the new school, the old school, and the back section of the rectory.

The Church's roof and steeple were strengthened, and there were several smaller projects and repairs throughout our campus and cemetery. The altar rail has also been restored. The old school building has received a

much-needed renovation to the first floor and restroom and is now able to be used for various parish activities and meetings. Pending building permits, an accessibility ramp to the old school will be built.



Renovated Old School Meeting Room



Having greater accessibility in mind, we have added new handicapped parking and seating for the church. In 2024, proposals will be vetted for an accessible restroom for the church to be built as an extension of the existing the parking lot side addition.

Some Important Events / Upcoming Dates

More info to come!

Saturday Feb 10th—Parish Dinner/Gathering

Feb 14—Ash Wednesday | March 31 Easter Sunday

Saturday April 20th—School Gala

Late May—Night at the Races Event (Exact Date TBD)



Drawing of Church with location of restroom expansion.